

cyberSLAPP.org

Don't chill online freedom of expression

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This web site is sponsored by a coalition of civil liberties and privacy groups (listed below) who have come together to protect the right to speak freely and anonymously on the internet. That right is endangered by a new form of lawsuit, called a "CyberSLAPP" suit, which threatens to overturn the promise of anonymous online speech and chill the freedom of expression that is central to the online world.

CyberSLAPP cases typically involve a person who has posted anonymous criticisms of a corporation or public figure on the Internet. The target of the criticism then files a frivolous lawsuit just so they can issue a subpoena to the Web site or Internet Service Provider (ISP) involved, discover the identity of their anonymous critic, and intimidate or silence them.

The groups have advocated a legal standard for courts to follow in deciding whether to compel the identification of anonymous speakers, requiring notice, an opportunity to be heard, and the right to have claims of wrongdoing both specified and justified on the facts before identities are revealed. The coalition also urges ISP's to adopt a set of "best practices" designed to afford notice to anonymous speakers that their identification is being sought, so that speakers can come to court to defend themselves. In addition, the coalition has created this web site to provide access to the best practices as well as a collection of legal resources that threatened Internet speakers can use to protect their rights.

The members of the coalition are the American Civil Liberties Union, the Center for Democracy and Technology, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the Electronic Privacy Information Center, and Public Citizen.

- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
- [ISP Letter](#)
- [Doe Press Release](#)

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